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HONORING THE LIFE OF  
CLARENCE THORNTON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 24, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of a dedicated patriot, Clarence Thornton, of Hampton, Connecticut. Mr. Thornton, a devoted veteran, husband, and father, passed away at the age of 101 on February 6, 2023.

Born in 1921, in Pomfret, Connecticut, to George Howard and Frances Thornton, Clarence was a beloved native of Eastern Connecticut. Through the nurturing of his family, Clarence's capacity for devotion to his community and country was endless. One of the most prominent and early examples of Clarence's devotion was by way of his service in the Army during World War II. Aged 21, Clarence heeded our Nation's call to action and began his service as a Heavy Truck Driver in 1942. Throughout his military career, Private First Class Thornton joined Allied forces in the campaign to liberate Europe and preserve world order, serving in the offensives of Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. Clarence was presented with several ribbons and medals for his honorable service.

Upon his honorable discharge in December 1945, Clarence returned to his native state of Connecticut, settling in Hampton, where he found new ways to give back to his community. Due to his striking resemblance to Abraham Lincoln, Clarence frequently portrayed the President during the town's Memorial Day Parades. He was also a hard worker who contributed to the local economy by way of several trades, including his precise touch for furniture making and painting homes in the surrounding region.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent patriots who are as humble, dutiful, and service-oriented as Clarence Thornton. Clarence will be forever remembered for his devotion to his large family and is specifically survived by his children: Keith and Michelle Thornton, Patricia Goodwin, Robert Thornton, Sandra and "Stretch" Thornton, Sharron and James Dickson, Sharlene Thornton; sister, Elsie May Johnson, and an even greater extended family. He was a beloved figure in town and his loss will continue to be felt throughout the region. To that end, I ask that my colleagues join me in observing the loss of Clarence Thornton.

NATIONAL POLLUTANT DIS-  
CHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM  
(NPDES)

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 24, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today I re-introduce an amendment to the Clean Water Act extending permit terms for publicly owned

water infrastructure projects under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). I thank my colleague Congressman KEN CALVERT (R-CA) for his support as the original cosponsor again this Congress.

This bipartisan bill would simply extend the NPDES permit term for projects owned and operated by local public agencies like water districts from the current 5 years up to 10 years. NPDES permit terms for private projects or industrial discharges would remain at the current 5-year term.

The United States has fallen behind many other developed nations in wastewater infrastructure, receiving a D-plus grade in the American Society of Civil Engineers' most recent report card. One reason for this lapse in infrastructure modernization is arbitrary permitting timetables imposed by federal law. Permit terms should match the construction timelines and on-the-ground reality for the projects to which those permits apply. This is currently not the case. With over 95 percent of wastewater infrastructure spending at the local level, according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, lengthening permit terms for local governments would be one of the most expeditious ways to encouraging further investment in 21st-century wastewater treatment and water recycling facilities.

Current NPDES permitting under the Clean Water Act has a maximum term of 5 years, an arbitrary timeline that is impracticable given prolonged construction schedules for local public agencies. As a result, California's State Water Resources Control Board and Clean Water Act regulators in other states are overwhelmed with a backlog of NPDES permitting requests for existing projects. New public projects are significantly delayed by this unnecessary bureaucracy, which also prevents regulators like California's State Water Resources Control Board from focusing on watershed-scale planning and water quality standards.

My bill would alleviate this burden by extending the maximum permit to 10 years, helping local water agencies nationwide better implement the Clean Water Act and cutting the current permitting backlog in half. Extending NPDES permit terms is a practical solution that allows local agencies to meet regulatory standards while building public water projects that measurably improve water quality, which after all is the purpose of the Clean Water Act.

In October 2019, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure passed my bill to allow States to issue NPDES permits with terms up to 10 years as part of then-Chairman DeFazio's bipartisan "Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2019" (H.R. 1497). Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to cosponsor this bipartisan bill.

RECOGNIZING ALLEGHENY TOWN-  
SHIP POLICE CHIEF LEO J.  
BERG, III

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 24, 2023

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Allegheny Township Police Chief Leo J. Berg, III, and thank him for his 30 years of service to the Blair County community.

The hallmark of Chief Berg's time in law enforcement is the relationships he built within the community he served. From responding to medical emergencies to treating every person he met with respect and dignity, Chief Berg strived to treat everyone he interacted with fairly and with respect.

His tireless efforts to enforce the law and keep Blair County safe have been invaluable. Through his commitment to training and professionalism, the Chief has set an example for young officers that will continue to serve Allegheny Township well.

Chief Berg, and his wife of 39 years, Kim Berg, have been pillars of Allegheny Township, and in his retirement, Chief Berg will leave a lasting legacy.

On behalf of all of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank Chief Berg for his service and wish him every continued success.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 24, 2023

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this February we celebrate the 23rd Black History Month. Black History Month is a time to honor the past contributions of Black people in American society and also to pay homage to those making progress currently and in the future. It is an annual celebration of achievements, reflection on challenges faced, and recognition of the central role of Black people in U.S. history.

Each Black History Month adopts a central theme. Last year's theme was "Black Health and Wellness;" this year, we focus on "Black Resistance." "Black Resistance" is a powerful message that refers to how, throughout history, African Americans have withstood, combatted, and opposed both intermittent or ongoing disadvantages and oppression. We've undergone being enslaved and having human and civil rights stripped away. For centuries, African Americans have faced enormous obstacles in numerous aspects of life, including education, economic security, healthcare, employment, housing, and criminal justice. African Americans routinely experience opportunity denial due to the color of our skin, and we continue to struggle for justice and equality for ourselves and communities in the face of systematic racism. In Chicago, as across the nation, Black families are more likely to live in poverty than white families, making it challenging to access decent education, health care, and other essential resources for a fulfilling life. Being Black in the United States is a complicated and multidimensional experience affected by historical, social, and cultural influences.

Black Resistance has helped overcome these barriers on the path to equality. African Americans have made enormous contributions to American culture, politics, and society. From the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter, Black people have battled for justice and equality. Their words and actions have molded the history and identity of our Nation. Black families have demonstrated Black Resistance—a remarkable endurance, fortitude, and perseverance in the face of adversity. Through all the pressures of life, Black